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ABSTRACT

This annual report discusses the work and progress of the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (Nuffic), which is devoted to achieving increased intercultural understanding, an equitable distribution of knowledge and infrastructure over all parts of the world, and improvement in the quality of education. Following a description of Nuffic's mission, a foreword, and a summary of trends in international cooperation, the report's chapters are: (1) "Internationalization"; (2) "Development Cooperation"; (3) "Credential Evaluation"; and (4) "Communication." Within each chapter, "Eyewitness," "Crystal Eye," and "Eye-Catchers" sidebars present interviews with people who have worked with Nuffic, predictions for the future, and notable results achieved by Nuffic in 1998, respectively. End matter includes a description of the organization's structure and departments, a financial summary, a list of publications, and a list of abbreviations. (EV)

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Nuffic

Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education

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Annual Report 1998

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"Linking knowledge worldwide" is not only the title of this annual report; it has also been Nuffic's motto since the end of 1998. In three words, Nuffic is trying to express the core of its identity, and the force that drives it. Nuffic brings people and knowledge together, and it brings together people who possess knowledge. It does this worldwide, because this gives the effort added value.

The present annual report demonstrates once again that Nuffic's activities are multi-faceted and extremely diverse. But every activity in one way or another is "linking knowledge worldwide", whether it involves managing programmes, evaluating credentials, awarding scholarships, consulting, teaching languages, communicating, or serving international networks. "Linking knowledge worldwide" gives Nuffic its cohesion. This too is demonstrated in the annual report for 1998.

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Mission

Nuffic fosters international cooperation in education and research. It seeks to achieve increased intercultural understanding, an equitable distribution of knowledge and infrastructure over all parts of the world, and improvement in the quality of education.

Nuffic pursues these objectives in specific ways:

- by supporting the internationalization activities of the Netherlands' universities, *hogescholen*[1], and institutes for International Education, and by helping five Dutch government ministries and the European Commission to implement internationalization policy;
- by assisting efforts to strengthen and increase the capacity of institutions for education and research in developing countries and countries in transition;
- by comparing education systems and facilitating the international recognition of educational and professional qualifications;
- by conducting research, offering training, and issuing recommendations;
- by providing information and facilitating communication in its areas of interest.

1 universities of professional education, which offer HBO •HogerBeroepsOnderwijs • higher professional education

Foreword

This era of globalization is also the era of identity. Every institution for higher education and research, everywhere in the world, is being embraced as never before by its own city, its own region, and its own country. It may seem paradoxical, but this is exactly why the institutions need a worldwide network, and why they are seeking ties with their fellow institutions throughout the world—institutions for higher education and research that are also being embraced by their own city, their own region, and their own country. For knowledge and science by their very nature transcend borders. The institutions have to reach out, and as they do, Nuffic is at their side.

This is why the present annual report is called "Linking knowledge worldwide", Nuffic's motto for the coming years. It is also why the theme of this annual report is the future. These were chosen because in 1998 Nuffic, as an intermediary organization, worked both inside and outside the organization to get ready for the stormy developments that the next few years are expected to bring. This eye to the future is illustrated in the report by two types of interviews. In "eyewitness" interviews, people outside the organization talk about their relationship with Nuffic. "Crystal eye" interviews are looks into the crystal ball of the future. "Eye-catchers" present the most notable results achieved by Nuffic in 1998.

One would expect that an organization with the name Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education would be well equipped for listening to the world. Nuffic indeed keeps a close watch on what is happening in higher education and research all over the globe. As a listening post, Nuffic is in a good position to identify and analyse the many-sided demand for higher education and research, and the many-sided supply offered by higher education institutions and systems. From its vantage point, Nuffic can see how the two can be matched up. But anyone who looks and listens also wants to respond. Sometimes Nuffic provides the response itself, and sometimes it points the way to the right person or organization for the job. Other times Nuffic lobbies to get something placed on the political agenda. Its countless contacts in higher education throughout the world at the level of associations and governments, and also at the level of individual institutions makes Nuffic an effective intermediary. It is also an active member of many international networks. No one will be surprised to learn that Nuffic is an enthusiastic user of the new information and communication technologies (ICT).

At the beginning of 1998, the directors and board of Nuffic launched a discussion of the mission and place of the organization. It was to be a process involving every member of staff. This collective deliberation has been an important cornerstone of the long-term plan that will take the organization into the year 2002. The "2002 process" should guarantee that Nuffic, as an organization, will continue to respond creatively to what is going on around it, both within the Netherlands and beyond. One such development is the increasing pervasiveness of ICT, which is speeding up communication at all levels. This itself has accelerated the need to respond to signals from the groups that Nuffic serves, which in turn necessitates a more client-oriented approach and the ability to provide custom-made solutions. The same thing is of course going on

everywhere; it is a worldwide phenomenon. Non-profit organizations and agencies are increasingly having to display the sort of efficiency and behaviour that up to now has been customary only in private enterprises.

To respond creatively to the opportunities and threats that present themselves in such a rapidly changing environment—in other words, to be able to deliver exactly the services that are needed, and to do it quickly—requires great flexibility. This is what the 2002 process is all about. It is also why Nuffic commissioned an examination of claims heard within the organization that its procedures were becoming too bureaucratic, and why an external specialist in opinion polling conducted a study of Nuffic's image among professionals outside the organization. The process of deliberation as well as the results of these two studies have provided Nuffic with important input for the further refinement of its products and services.

Drs. W. J. Deetman

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Trends in international cooperation

Harmonization of European education systems

The discussion of master's degrees in the Netherlands took on a new dimension in 1998 when the education ministers of France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Italy issued what is called the "Sorbonne declaration", in which they express a wish to harmonize the higher education systems of Europe on the basis of two cycles: an "undergraduate" cycle and a "graduate" cycle. These cycles were once present in the Dutch system, but disappeared in the early 1980s when the *kandidaats* degree was abandoned.

Within the Dutch academic community itself, there is new discussion about reintroducing university degrees at two levels. Everyone's main concern is that there be a transparent structure in which quality control and accreditation play a prominent role, thus ensuring that Dutch degrees and diplomas are properly recognized in other countries.

Networks and interest groups

As an intermediary organization, Nuffic fosters the creation of networks and interest groups in the field of internationalization. It does this through its own initiatives as well as through the services it offers to the Dutch academic community. The growing need for thematic networks became especially apparent in 1998 as staff members at universities, *hogescholen*, and International Education institutes called for discussion on several specific points, including the obstacles that stand in the way of international mobility, and contract education as a form of export product. Nuffic responded eagerly to this new demand from the higher education institutions.

Collaboration between industry, the education community, and government

As the higher education institutions internationalize their activities, they are feeling a growing need to work with organizations outside their own sector. New partners include regional and local government as well as private companies. Since both internationalization and development cooperation stem from the role of higher education in society, Nuffic encourages this new development. In 1998 Nuffic brought to the conference table representatives of private industry, higher education, and government. The aim, once they got to know each other better, was to identify the interests they have in common.

Reorientation of government policy

Grants for education and training are offered by several Dutch government ministries,[1] by international bodies such as the European Commission, and by governments of other countries. They channel funds into scholarship programmes and schemes for inter-institutional cooperation, creating an international market. If the Dutch higher education institutions are to compete well in this market, they must join forces. The Dutch government is increasingly recognizing this fact, and has formed a special steering committee for this purpose which brings together representatives of the various ministries. Nuffic of course plays a role in the committee.

Another new development within the Dutch government was the new policy for development cooperation which Minister Herfkens introduced in the fall of 1998. It features a sectoral

[1] Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport; Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management; Ministry of Economic Affairs; and Ministry of Foreign Affairs

approach and will reduce the number of countries on which Dutch funding is concentrated. These changes will have consequences for the relationships which a large number of Dutch higher education institutions have established with overseas partners for purposes of development cooperation. The effects will not be immediate, however. The minister has promised that no contracts currently in force will be terminated prematurely.

Quality control

The need for quality control is widely acknowledged throughout the Dutch academic community, and everyone agrees that new instruments are needed for measuring the quality of internationalization activities in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe. This demand prompted Nuffic, among other things, to conduct a one-day conference on the subject in 1998 under the auspices of the journal Transfer.

Electronic media

The demand for information in electronic form increased considerably and Nuffic rose to the challenge. Nuffic's website is now a strategic tool, and plays an essential role in accomplishing the organization's mission. A survey conducted among visitors to the website revealed that the users find it extremely informative, and an effective way to guide people to the knowledge they seek. ■

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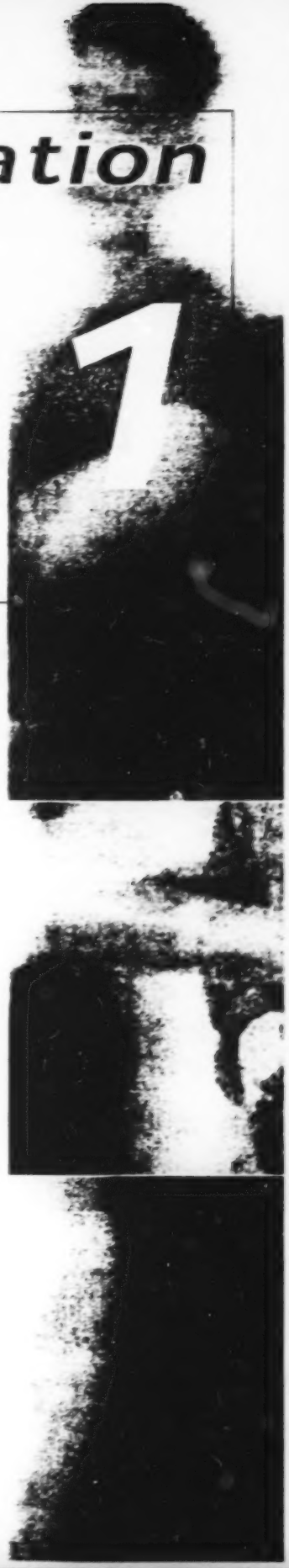
Internationalization

Nuffic stands ready to lend the universities of professional education *(hogescholen)* and International Education institutes a helping hand with their international strategy. Initially "internationalization" meant the international exchange of staff and students, but it soon came also to mean structural links of cooperation with higher education institutions in other countries. Nowadays the institutions themselves are becoming more international as well. This is expressed in the design of curricula, for example, and in the general policy of the institution as a whole. In other words, the universities, *hogescholen* and institutes are finding it increasingly important to acquire an international dimension in various ways. This trend became even more evident in 1998. Staff and student exchange and collaboration with institutions in other countries are now seen not as ends in themselves, but as means by which the Dutch institutions acquire a more international character. Nuffic supports these efforts through the internationalization programmes it manages, which offer financial encouragement to students, staff and the institutions themselves alongside the support that Nuffic provides in other ways.



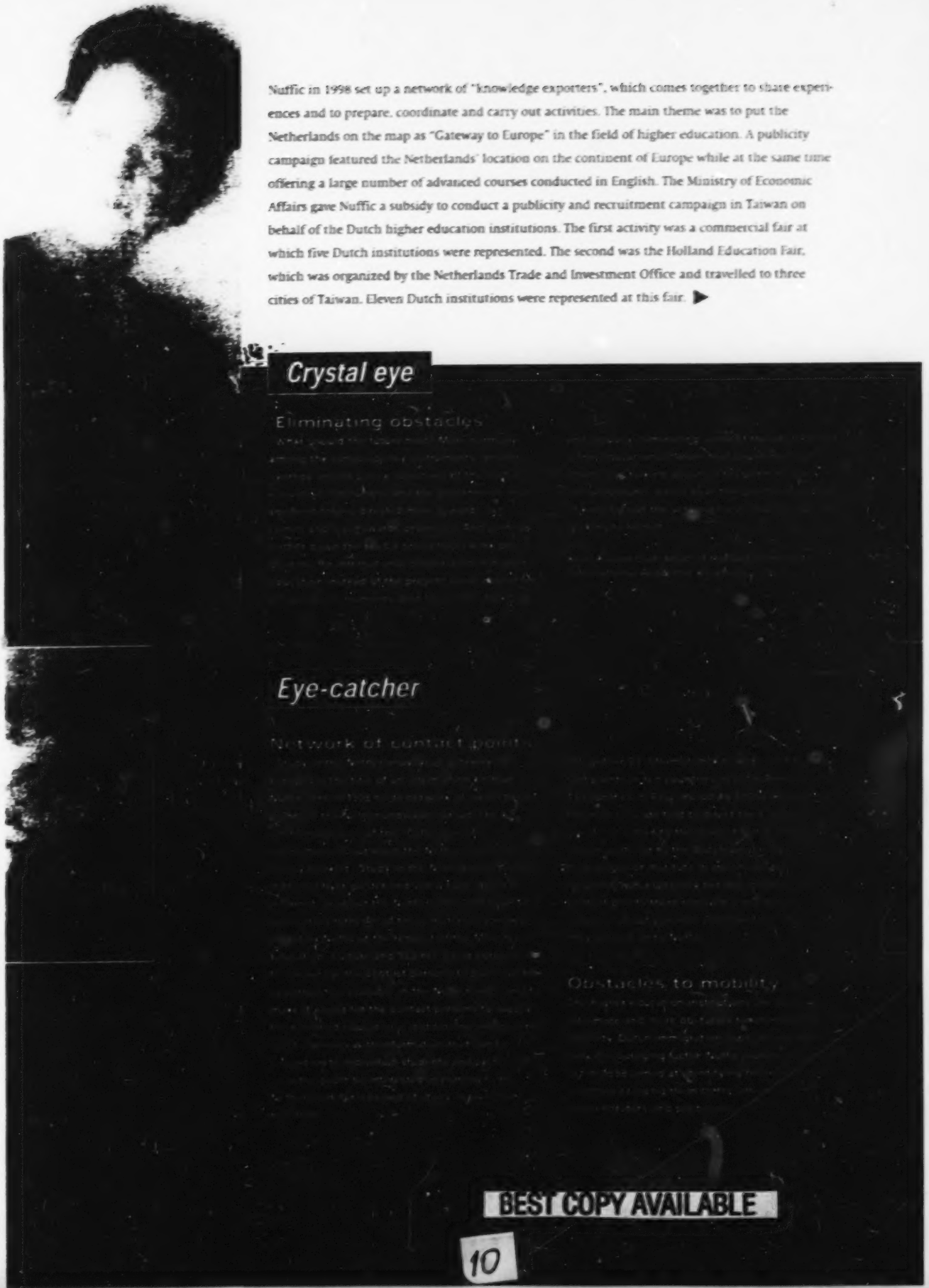
The big picture

As yet no one has conducted an inventory of all the internationalization activities taking place throughout the Dutch higher education community, many of which are at the faculty and departmental level. Nuffic does not have an overview of what is going on, and even the institutions' own international relations offices are unaware of some international activities. If all these activities were identified and placed in a big picture, it would be possible to provide some central direction and control. Whether or not this would in fact add value to the activities was a topic of discussion in 1998 for Nuffic as well as for the institutions.

Emerging markets

In 1998 the higher education community in the Netherlands turned its attention more than ever to its international image now that increasingly conscious attempts are being made to market the expertise that the institutions have to offer. The emerging markets are the first focus of these efforts, mainly because of their economic promise. The Dutch institutions have also found that this attention to marketing contributes to the ongoing process to improve the quality of their own education. For these reasons, several universities and *hogescholen* decided to continue supporting the Netherlands Education Centre in Jakarta despite the fact that the Centre's subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has run out.

Nuffic supported the institutions' efforts to establish an international name for themselves. This was done mainly at education trade fairs and exhibitions in Southeast Asia, which, despite the economic crisis, remains a very promising market. The success of Australia and the Netherlands' other major competitors in recruiting students from this region provide evidence for this. The Netherlands Trade and Investment Office, which the Ministry of Economic Affairs set up some time ago in Taiwan, is eager to add higher education to the Dutch export products it promotes. A logical next step will be the inclusion of higher education in the marketing campaign known as *"Nederland Kennisland"* ("Netherlands, Country of Knowledge"). Already a steering committee that brings together representatives of the higher education community, industry and government, is meeting for this purpose.



Nuffic in 1998 set up a network of "knowledge exporters", which comes together to share experiences and to prepare, coordinate and carry out activities. The main theme was to put the Netherlands on the map as "Gateway to Europe" in the field of higher education. A publicity campaign featured the Netherlands' location on the continent of Europe while at the same time offering a large number of advanced courses conducted in English. The Ministry of Economic Affairs gave Nuffic a subsidy to conduct a publicity and recruitment campaign in Taiwan on behalf of the Dutch higher education institutions. The first activity was a commercial fair at which five Dutch institutions were represented. The second was the Holland Education Fair, which was organized by the Netherlands Trade and Investment Office and travelled to three cities of Taiwan. Eleven Dutch institutions were represented at this fair. ▶

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Programme management

In 1998 Nuffic managed schemes on behalf of six sponsors seeking to encourage internationalization: three Dutch ministries (Education, Culture and Science; Economic Affairs; and Foreign Affairs), the European Commission, the VSB Fund, and the British Council. In each case, Nuffic's procedures are based on the priorities and criteria of the sponsor.

Big changes in the portfolio

All of the internationalization programmes which Nuffic is commissioned to manage are funded for limited periods of time. It was evident in 1998 that the era of open-ended arrangements is definitely over. Nuffic's portfolio of programmes underwent big changes. The Japan Prize Winners Programme, which enables outstanding young scholars to sample the business climate of Japan, was turned over to a foundation set up especially to run the programme. Another scheme of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science—the programme to stimulate internationalization known as Stir—reached its conclusion. These schemes were replaced by a large number of new ones, however: VISIE, Kubus, the Asia facility, Talis, Impact and the VSB Fund, for example. In 1998 much attention was also given to preparing for the new Huygens programme, which will replace the many small budgets made available through the Cultural Agreements between the Netherlands and a large number of other countries.

In 1998, 141 applicants profited from the Kubus programme, which pays a portion of the tuition fee for foreign students at Dutch art academies.

The scheme known as Talis enabled 15 outstanding students from Indonesia to take an international master's degree course in the Netherlands.

The special programme known as Impact is directed towards civil servants whose countries are preparing to join the European Union. It enables these officials to become acquainted with EU regulations by doing an internship in a Dutch agency or organization comparable to their own. Impact grants will not be awarded until 1999. 1998 was a year for preparing the publicity.

Visie is a scheme that enables Dutch secondary-school graduates to complete entire degree programmes in another EU member state. The funds will make 1000 grants possible over a period of three years. In the first year the number of applications was disappointing, perhaps because the publicity campaign could not begin until rather late in the year. Nevertheless, 88 students were awarded Visie grants in 1998.

Nuffic plays a role in several internationalization schemes for which it does not manage the finances. For the Leonardo programme, Nuffic helps with the selection and monitoring of projects. Nuffic selects and monitors Dutch students who study abroad in connection with a Cultural Agreement. And for the Tempus programme Nuffic advises people who apply for grants. ▶

Eye-catcher

Erasmus: the largest programme

Most popular fields and destination

Eyewitness

Grants for outstanding graduates

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"Linking Knowledge Worldwide"

Internationalization supported by policy, research and networks

Programme management is one of the main ways that Nuffic supports Dutch and European efforts to internationalize higher education. Its other activities preparing policy reports and recommendations, conducting applied research on request, and establishing and maintaining networks contribute to the expertise regarding internationalization that enables Nuffic to provide the best possible service to the Dutch government and higher education institutions, and to the European Union.

Cooperation with industry

In economic terms, Asia is an emerging market. Dutch universities of professional education *(hogescholen)* and International Education institutes would like to market their services in the region on a more professional basis, and are exploring possibilities of collaborating with Dutch export companies for this purpose. TIAS, an agency within Tilburg University, was asked in 1998 to write a report about how Dutch services in the field of education can best be marketed.

Studies of mobility and quality

In its research, training and advisory work, Nuffic does its best to stay one step ahead of developments in the field of internationalization. In 1998, research activities were concentrated mainly on one issue: mobility. Studies on this subject were commissioned by no fewer than three clients: the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; the Education Inspectorate; and the Academic Cooperation Council. Other studies in 1998 dealt with the quality and effects of internationalization.

Nuffic also offered training in internationalization, partly in cooperation with the European Association of International Education, and taught courses on the relationships between internationalization, intercultural interaction, and information and communication technologies.

Nuffic was asked to advise higher education institutions in Bulgaria regarding internationalization policy. Also on request, Nuffic analysed the structure and organization of the international affairs office of Wageningen Agricultural University.

Networks for specific topics

Nuffic held regular meetings in 1998 with the members of three networks: COI, HIB, and COSPA, all of which are made up of the university, *hogeschool*, and IE-institute staff members who are responsible for their institutions' internationalization strategies.

The programmes and schemes run by Nuffic were discussed, as well as other internationalization activities. Increasingly, however, the needs of these staff members are being met by networks devoted to a specific topic rather than by meetings of general, consultative bodies. The Cospa network of university and *hogeschool* staff members who coordinate international internships is one such specific network that has existed for some time. In 1998 it was joined by a new network of "knowledge exporters", and the first steps were taken for a network focussed on eliminating obstacles to international student and staff mobility.

Eye-catcher

Nuffic: also for visas and insurance

For many years Nuffic has administered the visa applications for Dutch students wishing to do internships in the United States. Now Nuffic is trying to achieve the same arrangement with other countries. In 1998 contacts were established with the Canadian and Australian authorities. It will take time to overcome all the administrative and diplomatic obstacles, however.

Nuffic has a collective arrangement for an insurance policy for Dutch students who are studying outside the country. It is reasonably priced and covers health, travel and liability. In 1998 Nuffic negotiated new terms with the insurance company.

Communication related to internationalization

In 1998 the information materials pertaining to internationalization were reviewed, and for each separate programme and scheme, the necessary leaflets and booklets were written. (See the list of publications at the end of this report.)

Anyone with specific questions can turn to Nuffic's Information Centre. The inquiries received by the Centre are an important measure of the need for standardized information in the form of factsheets or booklets. They also suggest which information should be placed on Nuffic's website. Numerous inquiries on the same subject led in 1998 to a factsheet in French about health insurance for students in the Netherlands. In general, Nuffic strives to match specific information to the needs of the target group as much as possible. ▶

The Information Centre in figures: 1998

Telephone calls, by subject		**Correspondence**	
Publication orders	6,124	Letters	2,761
General	3,902	e-mails	6,440
Diploma descriptions	566		
International Academic Relations	6,969	**Other**	
International Credential Evaluation	1,557	Research	188
Development Cooperation	509	Invoices	3,087
IRAS	105		
Total	19,752		
Visitors, by subject			
International Academic Relations	443		
Development Cooperation	260		
Diploma descriptions	44		
Internships	194		
Total	941		

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BeursOpener online

The *BeursOpener* is an electronic database of information about the various scholarships that can be used to help finance internships or periods of study or research in another country. In 1998 it was updated, and plans were made for placing it on the website in 1999, where it can be searched free of charge.

Students

"Vagant, de Nuffic-gids voor studie en stage in het buitenland" is published for Dutch students who are thinking of going abroad to study or do an internship. The new, 1998 edition is pocket-size as a result of a survey conducted among *Vagant's* readers. The new edition proved to be very popular: an extra printing was needed in order to meet the demand.

Two other Nuffic publications for which demand shows no signs of abating are "An introduction to living in Holland" and "A practical guide to living in Holland". Sales remain brisk. ■

Eye-catcher

Holland: Gateway to Europe

"Of all the countries on the continent of Europe, the Netherlands offers by far the most opportunities for education and training conducted in the English language. It is an ideal place to learn about Europe. Moreover, the major European capitals can all be reached within a few hours. In other words, for newcomers, the Netherlands is a perfect gateway to Europe." This was the message of a publicity campaign which Nuffic launched in 1998. The campaign is aimed mainly at the countries of Asia that are increasingly seeking direct contact with Europe.

Collective promotion

Dutch higher education institutions are becoming increasingly convinced that for promoting themselves abroad, they do best to combine forces.

Rather than compete with each other, they are finding it more effective to present Dutch higher education as a whole. But this requires harmonization and coordination as well as some joint planning. Nuffic's 1998 initiative to set up a network under the title "The export of higher education" was therefore received with enthusiasm by the universities, *hogescholen*, and institutes for International Education.

A number of the institutions that support the Netherlands Education Centre in Indonesia took part in 1998 in the general education exhibition and the Postgraduate Expo which took place in Jakarta. Twelve and ten Dutch institutions were represented at these fairs, respectively. In Taiwan, five Dutch institutions took part in a commercial fair in the spring, and 11 took part in the Holland Education Fair in November, which was organized with Nuffic's help by the Netherlands Trade and Investment Office. The Holland Education Fair was held in three cities of Taiwan.

Eyewitness

Holland Education Fair in Taiwan attracts postgraduates

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evelopment operation

Ever since its founding in 1952, Nuffic has assigned development cooperation a central place among its activities. Nuffic's broad aim is to help create the conditions for a humane international society by fostering international cooperation in education and research which is aimed at achieving a more balanced distribution of knowledge and knowledge infrastructure throughout the world. This effort primarily involves programme management, consultancy and advisory work.

In 1998 the Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education (MHO) occupied more of Nuffic's time and energy than any other programme. With a budget of some 45 million guilders a year, this is the largest programme that Nuffic manages. The MHO finances cooperative links between higher education institutions in the Netherlands and 12 partner institutions in the global South—the majority of which are in Africa. The purpose of the programme is to help institutions for education and research in the South to develop their human resources and strengthen their institutional capacities.

Cooperative links and the projects they entail are most effective if planning is flexible. But plans and objectives for the short, medium and long term must never be lost sight of, even if political unrest, strikes or other outside events affect partner universities, as happened in 1998. Fortunately, the economic decline experienced in much of the world in 1998 has not yet affected MHO activities, however.

Of all the scholarship programmes that Nuffic manages, the largest one is the Netherlands Fellowships Programme (NFP). The NFP is made up of four sub-programmes, all of which are aimed at helping developing countries to increase their institutions' capacities for education and research and to develop their human resources. The three sub-programmes assigned to Nuffic offer organizations in these countries the opportunity to send staff members to the Netherlands to receive the training called for in their own strategic plans for staff development. Through one of the sub-programmes, tailor-made training programmes can be designed on request.

Another sub-programme allows individual applicants to enrol in certain courses leading to an international master's degree, or in a customized programme of regular Dutch university study. Fellowships are awarded on the basis of academic and non-academic criteria, one of which is the relevance to national development of the career envisaged by the applicant.

Demand-driven programmes

In 1998 the government ordered an interdepartmental policy study that would analyse the nature and effects of Dutch development cooperation involving higher education. The report stressed that courses and programmes must be demand-driven and they must be flexible. Attention must also be given to the ratio of cost to quality. The recommendations in the report were very much in line with several changes made in the MHO programme in order to increase its flexibility and make it more demand-driven. The report also called for cutting back the basic ▶

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subsidy to the International Education institutes, and for encouraging those institutes, through competition, to do the best possible job of meeting the demand that the Netherlands Fellowships Programme is also designed to fill. It became clear that the NFP will also have to change. If the recommendations in the ministry's report are acted upon, the consequences for the institutes will be very great indeed.

Sectoral support

Changes in the cabinet in 1998 put a new minister in charge of development cooperation. Jan Pronk was succeeded by Evelien Herfkens, who immediately announced a change of policy. Structural, bilateral relations will be restricted to 19 of the world's poorest countries, which were selected for having a competent administration and sound policies. The new minister also announced that the recipient countries will be given more freedom to use sectoral assistance as they see fit. Eventually, this form of Dutch assistance will no longer be tied to specific projects and programmes. The implementation of these new policies will have major consequences for Dutch development cooperation, also in the field of higher education.

ICT and developing countries

The new information and communication technologies (ICT) are rapidly finding their way to developing countries and countries in transition. The technologies give these countries a new and relatively inexpensive way to catch up in the acquisition of knowledge. Among other things, ICT offers outstanding possibilities for distance education. In 1998 Nuffic worked hard to make sure that all the institutions taking part in the MHO were connected to the Internet. This creates a channel for fast, direct communication, also—and perhaps most importantly—between the various institutions in the South. This has given the MHO a new dimension.

Nevertheless, there are still problems. Compared with the situation in the industrialized countries, access to the Internet is restricted to a chosen few in developing countries. Moreover, there is a tendency for important scientific information to be increasingly removed from the public domain and placed on Internet sites that charge subscriptions for access. And finally, an Internet connection is no guarantee that the Internet will be used effectively. Policy choices must be made. This is all the more necessary in countries where budgets are small. Even if relatively inexpensive ICT is introduced effectively, its effective use costs money and time. For Nuffic this was a reason in 1998 to bring together national and international experts to discuss ICT and higher education in developing countries. The results of this conference will be published in a book about ICT policy, which in places will have the character of a manual. Nuffic will of course also be placing this information free of charge on its website.

Programme management

In 1998 Nuffic was managing more than 20 programmes and schemes designed to strengthen the human resources and increase the capacities of higher education institutions in developing countries and/or countries in transition. These fall into two general categories: scholarship programmes, and schemes that support cooperation projects. Nuffic as programme manager was found to offer a good ratio of price to quality. This was the conclusion of a study conducted in 1998 by the independent consultancy KPMG, which in general found Nuffic to be efficient.

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Scholarship programmes

In 1998 the administration of two sub-programmes of the Netherlands Fellowships Programme was turned over entirely to Nuffic. These are the Special Programme and the University Fellowships Programme. At the request of the foreign ministry, Nuffic is now also responsible for the assessment procedures and decision-making related to these sub-programmes.

EU and UN schemes

In 1998 Nuffic found places at Dutch universities and research institutes for the recipients of scholarships awarded by four international organizations: IAEA, NUC, ILO and FAO. The agreement between Nuffic and the European Union's European Development Fund (EDF) was revised in 1998 to include the placement and supervision of EDF scholarship recipients in Belgium and Luxembourg.

Eye-catcher

Netherlands Fellowships Programme

Nuffic manages three of the four parts of the Netherlands Fellowships Programme. These are the Special Fellowships Programme (SFP), the University Fellowships Programme (UFP), and the Zuid-Europese Scholarships Programme (ZSP).

Tailor-made training

For the SFP, Nuffic runs tailor-made training programmes. Nuffic in Den Haag established a short profile and a [illegible] committee for assessing applications and training recommendations. Altogether some 30 proposals for training were assessed in 1998, and 28 training programmes were carried out in which a total of 262 people took part.

Rapid growth

The UFP enables recent graduates to enrolen master's degree programmes at Dutch universities. This sub-programme experienced a rapid expansion in 1998. The number of applications grew from 200 in the academic year 1997/98 to over 1600 in 1998/99. A total of 119 fellowships were awarded in 1998.

Popular programme

The ZSP finances student exchanges between universities in developing countries and universities in the Netherlands. This programme grew considerably in popularity in 1998. Nuffic received several hundred applications. Altogether 46 overseas students came for a period of study at a Dutch university, and 49 Dutch students went to a partner university in a developing country.

Exchange of master's degree students

In 1998 preparations got underway for the Postgraduate Technology Studies (PTS) Programme, which Nuffic will manage. The PTS provides funds for exchanging master's degree students between the Asian Institute for Technology (AIT) in Bangkok, and universities and research institutes in Europe. Nuffic will place Asian students at European institutions and monitor their progress. Nuffic will also publicize the programme in Europe among students who might be interested in working on a master's degree at the AIT.

Other activities

Nuffic played a role in several fact-finding missions and other activities pertaining to aspects of international cooperation in education and research, and received a number of delegations ranging from representatives of a Rwandan technical school and the University of Zulia in Venezuela, to the ambassadors of many countries around the globe. Nuffic also signed a memorandum of ▶

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understanding with the Ministry for Culture and Higher Education of Iran, and an agreement with the Taiwanese government by which Nuffic, when requested, will organize study visits for Taiwanese government officials.

Cooperation programmes

In the area of inter-institutional cooperation for purposes of development, Nuffic manages two programmes:

- the Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education (MHO);
- the Programme for Cooperation between Dutch Universities of Professional Education and Educational Institutions in Developing Countries for the Benefit of Primary Education (HOB).

No new partner institutions were added to the MHO programme in 1998; the entire budget was required for the existing ones. Inter-institutional linkages are by nature long-term, and only when one is concluded is there room for a new one. The projects that fall within the linkages are another matter, however. In 1998 proposals for 19 new projects were submitted for approval to an independent committee before getting underway. Because the project committee suggests how proposals might be improved, the assessment procedure is also an instrument for quality control.

Quality control was also the reason for the monitoring missions undertaken by Nuffic. Mission teams compare the original objectives with what is actually being achieved. Changing political and economic circumstances are of course taken into account. The mission reports in 1998 confirmed the importance of making realistic plans.

Two HOB projects were being conducted in 1998: in Zambia and in Mozambique. Both cases involve support for teachers at teacher-training academies. Issues of school management were addressed alongside the matters pertaining to curricula.

Eye-catcher

A renewed MHO, based on the partner's situation

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Eyewitness

HOB: careful preparation is the best guarantee of success

'It doesn't make sense simply to pour large sums of money into a country with a low standard of living. It's better first to raise the level of primary education. Give the people the knowledge and skills they need to start improving their lives themselves. This means supporting the training of teachers.

'That is what the HOB programme does. The content of the programme is not dictated from the Netherlands. No, the recipient country itself indicates what it needs. But for this you need lots of consultation, which takes time. Sometimes it takes more than a year just to prepare a project. The HOB programme is still in a trial phase; in two years the foreign ministry will decide whether to give it the official go-ahead. But the ministry's Directorate General for International Cooperation is rather impatient. It wants to see quick results. The project committee, on the other hand, believes that the time invested in careful preparation will be well spent if the programme runs well because of it.

'I think the way Nuffic is going about it is perfect. It's a modest programme, but in an excellent way it's responding to the needs and wishes of recipient countries. HOB is one of the few schemes intended for higher professional education. It would be nice if more resources become available for it, so that it can gradually catch on all over the world. To me, that is what's important.

Ms drs. Nel Ginjaar-Maas, chair of the HOB Project Committee and former State Secretary of Education

Autonomous secretariats

Nuffic is home to two autonomous secretariats: one for the Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO), and one for the steering committee of the Netherlands-Israel Development Research Programme (NIRP). RAWOO and the NIRP steering committee both implement their own independent policies. Nuffic is responsible for managing the finances and personnel, and provides client-oriented administrative support. Each secretariat accounts for its activities in its own annual report.

National Commission for UNESCO

At the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Nuffic in 1995 incorporated the National Commission for UNESCO into its own organization and became home to the Commission's secretariat. The Commission itself is responsible for the activities of the secretariat, but Nuffic manages the finances as part of its own budget. ▶

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"Linking Knowledge Worldwide"

Internationalization supported by: policy, research and networks

In most developing countries, the administration of education is undergoing decentralization. Central control from the capital city is less common. Instead, education is increasingly being run at regional and local levels, and local government is becoming responsible also for the quality of schools and for access to them. In 1998 Nuffic was closely involved in programmes that support these processes. Nuffic is also an active partner in a number of consortiums for this purpose.

Advisory role

Nuffic contributes to the drafting of policy for development cooperation by issuing several types of recommendations:

- recommendations regarding the management and implementation of the various scholarship programmes and development-cooperation schemes. These are issued, for example, to the MHO project committee, to the foreign ministry's Directorate General for International Cooperation, to Dutch higher education institutions that conduct projects, and to the council for the HOB programme;
- background information and specific advice for Dutch government ministers who are preparing to visit a developing country;
- recommendations, requested by the government, regarding the foreign alumni who have studied in the Netherlands;
- advice to Dutch universities of professional education *(hogescholen)* on a variety of subjects related to development cooperation.

Projects: implementation, monitoring and evaluation

In the past Nuffic was involved mainly with the evaluation of education projects, but a new trend was again visible in 1998. Nuffic's specialists are now just as often being asked to play a major role in the planning, implementation and technical supervision of education projects. These projects have ranged from non-formal adult literacy programmes in Ghana, to formal basic education in India, Pakistan, Tanzania and Guatemala. Nuffic advisors were also involved with higher education in Vietnam and Indonesia. This work was done in cooperation with other European organizations and with institutions in the South. Nuffic's consultancy assignments were commissioned by a large number of clients: the Dutch government, governments of other donor countries, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the European Commission, FAO, UNESCO, education ministries in various countries, Oxfam, and the Flemish Inter-University Council.

Stormy weather

A number of consultancy missions related to the strengthening of higher education institutions in developing countries and countries in transition had to be postponed or cancelled in 1998 because of stormy weather. In India and Indonesia the turbulence was of a political nature, and in Central America there were storms in the literal sense—in the form of Hurricane Mitch.

International clients

The main international clients were non-government organizations, government ministries, donor organizations, and development banks. They included the Indonesian government, Ghana's Ministry of Education, Great Britain's Oxfam, and Belgium's Flemish Inter-University Council.

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Eye-catcher

Education for Mayas in their native language

In the peace agreement that brought an end to more than 30 years of civil war in Guatemala in 1996, educational reform was a prominent feature. Since 1998 Nuffic—together with Cito and BMB Bureconsult—has been responsible for a project sponsored by the European Commission which is aimed at improving education in the remote areas Ixta and Baja Verapaz. Schools are being made more accessible to the local Mayan population, and curricula are being adapted to meet the needs of these people. The project uses a participatory approach, which means that the local community is actively drawn into the project at all stages. The intended result is a feeling of ownership that is too often missing from development projects.

Dutch clients

Most of Nuffic's assignments flow from its administrative agreements with the foreign ministry's Directorate General of International Education, and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Other national clients in 1998 were BMB Consultancy for Development, and Wageningen Agricultural University.

Nuffic wrote letters expressing interest in projects involving higher education in the Maldives, primary education in Pakistan, vocational education in Lebanon, science and technology in Sri Lanka, and skills training in South Africa. ▶

Eyewitness

Training for the managers of Jordan's air traffic

"The Rijksluchtvaartdienst (RLD, Directorate General of Civil Aviation) and Nuffic together set up a programme of training in air traffic management for top officials of Jordan's Civil Aviation Authority and Royal Jordanian Airlines. The project involved close cooperation with the Jordanian authorities, Maastricht School of Management, the Netherlands Aviation Academy, and Queen Noor Technical College in Amman.

This training was very much in line with Nuffic policy, contributing as it did both to improving knowledge infrastructure and to strengthening bilateral relations with Jordan. For the RLD it was also important that the project objectives be in line with our policy for technical assistance, which is to contribute to improving bilateral aviation relations and to support the long-term development of the aviation sector as a whole. The training programme laid the foundation for further development of the aviation sector in Jordan.

Because the entire top level of Jordan's air traffic community was taking part, the programme was split in two. The Jordanians were so enthusiastic about the first part, which took place in 1998 and was funded through Nuffic and the RLD, that they are paying for the entire second part themselves. The second group is scheduled to begin its training in April, 1999.

One important result of the training programme is that Maastricht School of Management (MSM) and Queen Noor Technical College have together set up an aviation training programme in Amman. And MSM is starting up an MBA programme in aviation in Maastricht.

Drs Guido M. Landheer, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (RLD), Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management

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Eye-catcher

Bridge between higher education and basic education in Vietnam

Together with the development cooperation office of the University of Amsterdam, Nuffic in 1998 was involved in a project to set up six pilot community colleges in Vietnam. The training of teachers is an important part of the project, which creates a bridge between higher education and basic education in Vietnam. The project is expected to provide more insight into the general question of how the higher education community can help to improve basic education.

The concept of the community college as a new form of higher education in Vietnam will be explored in detail through the six pilot projects, which will also address management issues. Special attention will be given to the educational

Indigenous Knowledge Network

Nuffic has been coordinating the Indigenous Knowledge and Development Network since 1992. The members of this international network are united in their wish to see local knowledge incorporated into development programmes and the practice of modern science.

The World Bank's 1998-1999 World Development Report discussed the essential role that knowledge plays in the process of social and economic development. For the first time in its history, the World Bank acknowledged indigenous knowledge (IK) as having a role to play during the preparation and implementation of programmes and projects in developing countries. The Bank added deeds to its words in November 1998, when it launched the Indigenous Knowledge and Development Initiative. This breakthrough improved the climate for the IK network, and encouraged Nuffic in its efforts to support the network in 1998. Nuffic's activities in this area fell into several categories:

- the development of policy in order to promote the use of indigenous knowledge in education, training and research;
- support for initiatives designed to improve local knowledge infrastructure;
- encouragement of research related to indigenous knowledge and relationship to development;
- encouragement of international cooperation for purposes of education, training, research, and the exchange of information.

Against this background, a brainstorming session was held in December 1998 in The Hague. The topic of discussion was the mission of the Indigenous Knowledge and Development Network. The session was attended by independent experts from Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Germany.

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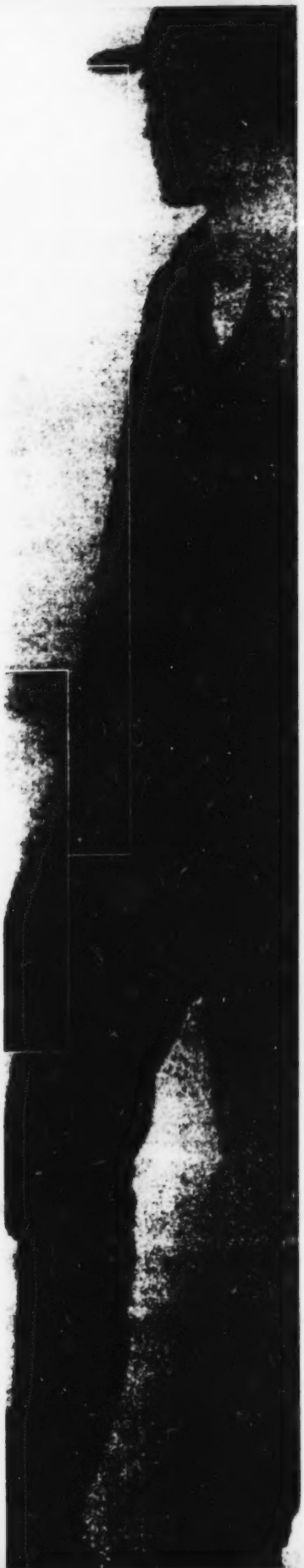

World Bank

The prominent presence of the Indigenous Knowledge and Development Network on the Internet initially aroused the interest of the World Bank. Within the framework of the IK Initiative, Nuffic became a partner of the World Bank and now is helping the Bank to collect and systematically store indigenous knowledge. This effort will make it easier to integrate indigenous knowledge into development programmes—an aim that fits into the plans of the World Bank to develop itself into a "knowledge bank"—a repository of the knowledge needed for good development programmes.

The first evidence of Nuffic's partnership with the World Bank was the cover letter from Nuffic which the World Bank sent with its inquiry into the capacity and capability of a number of IK resource centres in Africa which are members of the international Indigenous Knowledge and Development Network. Besides the World Bank and Nuffic, six other organizations are taking part in the IK Initiative: IDRC, UNDP, WHO, UNESCO, WIPO and ILO.

UNESCO

In 1998 Nuffic began collaborating with UNESCO in the field of Indigenous Knowledge and Development. As part of its MOST (Management Of Social Transformation) programme, UNESCO is assembling a database of "best practices". Nuffic will be responsible for supplying the section of the database containing best practices related to indigenous knowledge. The effort will also result in a joint publication.

ILO-Indisco

Through the Indisco programme, Nuffic and the International Labour Organization (ILO, in Geneva) are working together to encourage the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and practices into the planning and implementation of development projects and programmes. Nuffic provided the keynote speaker for the donors workshop which ILO-Indisco held in Davao City, the Philippines, in November 1998. The title of the keynote speech was "Incorporating indigenous knowledge into development efforts: present and future prospects for donors and indigenous peoples." Nuffic has also served this project as a policy consultant.

On-line directory of Africanists

A database of information on researchers in the Netherlands who specialize in Africa was placed on the World Wide Web in 1998 and will be maintained with the help of the Africa Study Centre, the Netherlands Institute for South Africa, and the Netherlands Society for African Studies. Also in 1998, the first steps were taken to create a similar directory of researchers whose work involves Latin America and/or the Caribbean region. This time Nuffic's partners are the Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation, and the Netherlands Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies. ■

Eye-catcher

Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor

The periodical 'Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor' is read mainly by policy makers and researchers around the world who are directly involved with sustainable development.

High priority for the South

The main purpose served by the Monitor in 1998 was the exchange of information. Contributions from the South received priority, and the composition of the Editorial Board changed. The Board now has nine members, six of whom live and work in Africa, Asia or Latin America. The three other members are the directors of the three centres that founded the IK Network: CIRAN, CIKARD (at the University of Iowa) and ETC-PAU (at Leiden University).

Interactive debates

Mailing lists, e-mail discussions and online conferences have opened up whole new possibilities for interactive, up-to-the-minute debates. It is not surprising that the first mailing and software website visitors are visiting the IK Monitor online. In 1998 the number of visits doubled, from just over 50,000 in 1997 to some 119,000 in 1998. An average of 12 electronic pages a day were consulted in 1998.

Crystal eye

Information today: up-to-date, coherent and dynamic

"We are switching more and more from printed publications to the online presentation of information. It is is happening before, but in 1998 it really took off. You could probably even call it a watershed year. This is having consequences for processes within the organization. You have to learn a whole new concept of 'up-to-date'. The change goes very far. Often you can even say that information is obsolete as soon as you've published it in printed form. While we were still entirely dependent on printed information, whether as producers or consumers, we learned to live with this. But now, in principle, you can electronically publish or withdraw at any moment of any day. And that is what the user is starting to expect.

Besides the much greater speed, there's a second revolutionary change to go with the era of print. You can present information online far more coherently. And you can deliver information to individual users exactly according to their own specifications. But that's not all. The old process of supplying static information – simply because you had no alternatives – is quickly giving way to a dynamic process. Now there is interaction between the supplier of information and the user. It's clear that this has great consequences for the way we organize our work, and for the way that Nuffic functions as information broker. But we have to grow into it. We're dealing with a whole new phenomenon. We can no longer fall back on past experience and current models. They're no help any more. This makes it an exciting time."

Gerard van Westerhoven, senior staff member CIRAN

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Communication related to development cooperation

Information about programmes of cooperation aimed at strengthening higher education institutions in developing countries was disseminated in 1998, alongside the information pertaining to internationalization. The annual Catalogue of International Courses in the Netherlands is just one example. This is a complete guide to the more than 450 advanced courses conducted in English.

www.nuffic.nl

The Internet is rapidly gaining ground as a channel for disseminating information. This is apparent in the growing number of visitors to the Nuffic website and its many pages. More and more of the information about development cooperation, like the other subjects, was made accessible by electronic means.

Factsheets

But there remains a need for printed media. Not every target group is connected to the Internet. For specific subgroups, separate factsheets are prepared—for example, for potential applicants for a scholarship from the Netherlands Fellowships Programme.

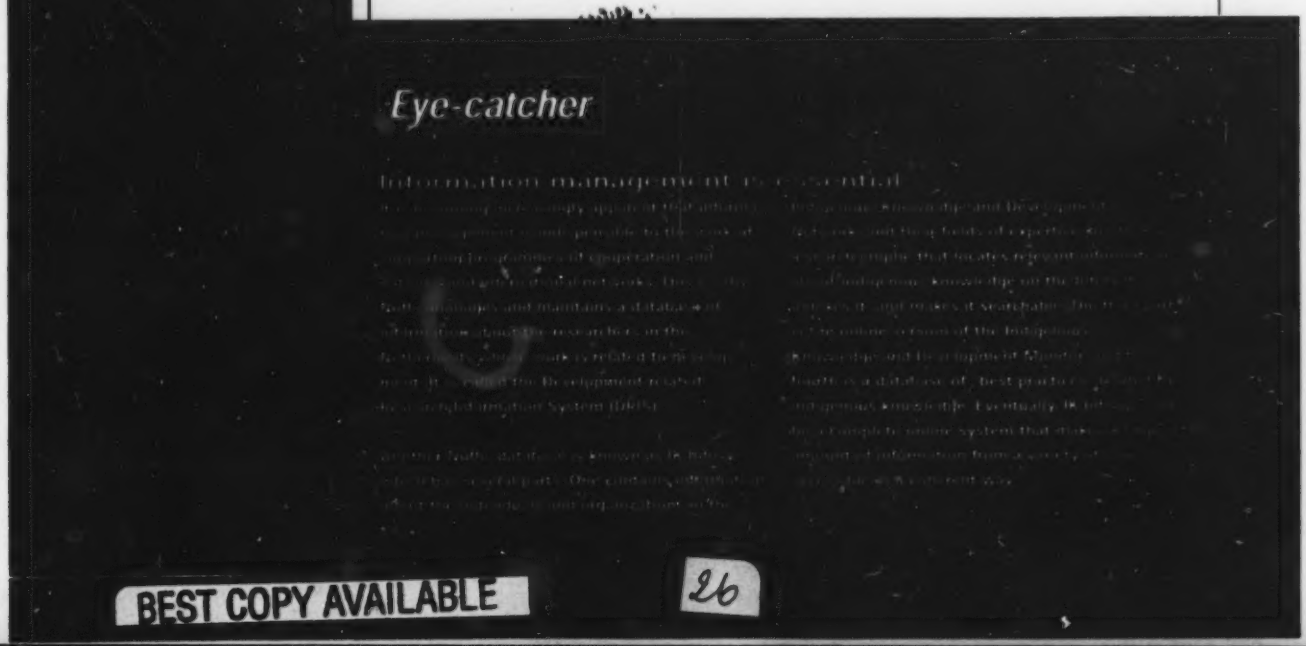
Contacts

Contacts with sister organizations—other organizations that work with funds from the Dutch government, for example—were given structure in 1998. Among other things, this has made it easier to respond creatively to important changes being made in the approach to development issues.

Conferences

Several publications were prepared in connection with conferences and symposia in 1998. One resulted from a closed meeting of experts on the role of ICT in development cooperation, and another from a conference to discuss development cooperation in higher education. In 1998 Nuffic also contributed to a conference about the future of cooperation between higher education institutions in North and South, which was organized by the University of Groningen.

Eye-catcher



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Credential evaluation

Credential evaluation, and the comparison of education systems on which it is based, has been a professional speciality of Nuffic since the 1950s. Differences between the credentials awarded in the various national education systems make it difficult for students to move from one system to another. The degrees, diplomas and titles that people earn in different countries do not always mean equal or even equivalent qualifications.

Nuffic through the years has become a centre of expertise in this area. Its original reason for acquiring this knowledge was to be able to issue recommendations about the value of specific foreign diplomas in terms of the Dutch system. In 1998 this was also an important activity of Nuffic, but the organization now does more. Nuffic now also supplies an international audience with objective information about the structure and quality of Dutch education, and helps to prepare international treaties regarding the mutual recognition of diplomas. Nuffic is known in other countries for its expertise in this area, which is leading to a growing number of consulting assignments and requests for training.

Growing need for diploma descriptions

Dutch graduates are more often leaving the country to work, and they are going to more and more different destinations. This explains the growing demand for explanations of Dutch credentials. Nuffic in 1998 took a step towards meeting this demand through the creation of the Diploma Description, which gives the main features of the study programme a person followed, and indicates the diploma's relative value in terms of the recipient country's system. Another instrument for this purpose is the International Diploma Supplement (IDS). In 1998 this was updated by a working group of the European Commission, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

More recommendations required

The number of requests for Nuffic's advice regarding the value of credentials rose sharply in 1998. At the same time, Nuffic's regular clients are increasingly able to assess common foreign credentials themselves, which means that the cases Nuffic is asked to examine are more and more complex.

Eyewitness

"Credential evaluation means a lot to asylum-seekers"

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Crystal eye

"Credential evaluation is part of the process"

The government sees credential evaluation as a component of the process by which refugees and other immigrants assimilate. This means that the regional offices for careers counselling (AOBs) cannot charge much for this service, and we need a subsidy to cover the costs. In the more than four years since immigrants were told they could get their diplomas evaluated at their own AOB the flood of requests has never subsided. That's how we got through our subsidy much faster than planned.

In 1997 the plans were made for an agreement between the AOBs and the three centres of expertise in credential evaluation: IBG, COLO and Nuffic. Then an arrangement for funding had to be made with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Everything is almost ready now, and the agreement should take effect in September 1999. It will change the way credential evaluations are produced, although the client will not notice any difference. The AOBs will continue to evaluate diplomas for a reasonable fee. But the new subsidy from the ministry will make it possible for us to innovate, to keep our expertise up to the minute through training, and to coordinate our efforts with Nuffic and the other parties.

My dream for the future is that all activities related to the evaluation of credentials – from primary school certificates to advanced degrees – will be brought together within one organization of kind. Credential evaluation would then be part of a process that is orchestrated by one organization. But as new structures are created, two things must always be kept in mind: quality assurance, and service to the customer.

Drs Dirs Versloot, national coordinator for international credential evaluation on behalf of the regional offices for careers counselling (AOBs)

A broader circle of clients

The Nuffic department that compares education systems and evaluates credentials expanded its circle of clients in 1998. Its new clients include private companies. For the employment agency Start Holding, Nuffic described and evaluated the 40 foreign diplomas which the agency most often encounters. Start placed this information on its own internal network, thus making it easier for the agency's staff to mediate successfully on behalf of its clients with foreign diplomas.

The recognition of virtual education

An international survey conducted by Nuffic in 1998 regarding education offered via the Internet revealed that quality assurance is a major problem. Many "virtual" courses lack educational merit, making the recognition of diplomas awarded upon their completion a dubious business. Nuffic has now begun to develop several instruments for the recognition of education offered online.

Professional qualifications

The recognition of academic qualifications and of professional qualifications are increasingly converging into a single field. This is evident in the fact that Nuffic is receiving more and more requests concerning professional qualifications. There is also growing cooperation between professional associations, industry, and the higher education community for the international acceptance and recognition of credentials for practising professions. Nuffic, appointed under the name IRAS as the national information centre regarding the EU's directive on a general system for the recognition of professional qualifications, is an important centre of expertise in this area. In 1998 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science renewed Nuffic's IRAS mandate. ▶

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Eye-catcher

Right to an explanation

National and international laws give people the right to demand explanations for conclusions that are reached pertaining to them. The holders of foreign diplomas have a right to know which criteria were used to evaluate their diplomas. For example, if the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport denies a physician educated outside the Netherlands the right to practise in this country, that physician may appeal the decision. In such cases, the ministry often asks Nuffic for an expert opinion.

Measuring competences, rather than content, is the business of credential evaluation. Attention is increasingly shifting away from the educational process itself and towards the skills that a person acquires. These are called 'competences', and their measurement is not easy. Nuffic, together with its partner organizations at home and abroad, plans to examine the methods currently available and to assess their suitability for evaluating credentials in these new terms.

Master's degree courses

Together with the associations of higher education institutions in the Netherlands, Nuffic in 1998 urged that the status of master's degree courses be made official. Alongside their regular study programmes, the Dutch universities and *hogescholen* now offer approximately 100 programmes, conducted in English, through which students can earn master's degrees. The fact that these are not regulated by Dutch law, as the other programmes are, is a source of much misunderstanding abroad. This issue will be placed higher on the agenda, and Nuffic hopes to find a solution—in close consultation with the higher education institutions, of course. The Sorbonne declaration, which was signed in 1998 (see Foreword), prompted Nuffic, as the Dutch member of the NARIC network, to prepare a seminar on the subject.

Instrumental support

Nuffic's credential evaluators accept research and consultancy assignments from external clients only if the topics are directly related to the international recognition of diplomas and study programmes. Such relevant topics have included credit transfer, and systems and mechanisms for accreditation and certification. These are instruments in support of credential evaluation. The European Commission and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science were Nuffic's main clients in this area in 1998.

European Commission

Studies conducted for the European Commission in 1998 included a description of the academic recognition procedures of each member state, and the bodies that are responsible for this. Other topics which Nuffic was commissioned to deal with were: the role of professional associations; quality control and accreditation mechanisms in Central and Eastern Europe; the phenomenon of virtual higher education in the EU and the EFTA; the development of a core curriculum in Marketing (together with SRM, NIMA and the European Marketing Federation); changes in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the way it is being used by higher education institutions; and a certification system for a management course in Bulgaria.

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Phare Multi-Country Programme in Higher Education

At the request of the European Commission, Nuffic headed the international consortium that ran a project known as "Recognition of higher education diplomas and study credit points across borders". In 11 countries of Central and Eastern Europe, attention was given to the mechanisms and procedures for academic recognition, and networks for this purpose were set up or strengthened. The project included the introduction of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the Diploma Supplement.

For the NAFIC in Prague and for the British Council

The National Training Fund in Prague asked Nuffic for feedback in response to a study entitled "Quality assessment and quality assurance of management training". At the request of the British Council, Nuffic in 1998 organized study visits for several visiting delegations. These included a group of officials from Poland's Ministry of Education.

For the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

One assignment commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in 1998 was related to the list of diplomas and study programmes in other countries of the EU and EEA which Nuffic had drawn up for the ministry's student grant scheme known as VISIE. To help the ministry make decisions regarding grant applications from practising artists, Nuffic was asked for a list of programmes in other countries that are equivalent to Dutch programmes in the fine and performing arts.

The ministry asked Nuffic to contribute to two other projects as well. One was entitled "Quality assurance in and accreditation of non-state higher education institutions in the Russian Federation", which was funded via CROSS and conducted in cooperation with the associations of universities and *hogescholen* (VSNU and HBO-Raad). The other was the production of the *"Grenslandengids"*, a catalogue of the study programmes offered in the border regions of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Since 1991, at the request of the ministry, Nuffic has acted as the information centre regarding the EU's directive on a general system for the recognition of professional qualifications. This function is known as IRAS.

Babel

On behalf of the Dutch higher education institutions, Nuffic works with Babel, the agency in Utrecht which provides translations for the International Diploma Supplement (IDS).

In search of partners

Nuffic has long been a leading member of several national and international networks of credential evaluators, but in 1998 contacts were also established with other organizations and bodies that play, or could play, an important role in this area. The *Examenkamer* (Chamber of Examiners) is an association representing the private sector in Dutch education. Its members include such organizations as EXIN and NIMA, which set national exams in informatics and marketing, respectively. Nuffic hopes to help achieve international recognition for qualifications people earn in this sector. ▶

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Central and Eastern Europe

The contacts that credential evaluators maintain with each other through their European networks—namely NARIC and ENIC—remain essential to their work. In 1998 the contacts were intensified with the 12 centres in Central and Eastern Europe that are responsible for information regarding matters of equivalence. The Phare "Multi-country programme for the recognition of higher education qualifications and credit points across borders", mentioned above, played a major role in this.

Africa and Southeast Asia

In 1998 Nuffic established its first contacts with organizations and networks relevant to credential evaluation outside Europe. Some were in Africa and others in Southeast Asia. The activities to promote Dutch higher education in Southeast Asia made it all the more important that Dutch qualifications receive proper recognition. Descriptions of Dutch higher education were written in terms that would be familiar to readers in this region.

A working group representing both Nuffic and the higher education institutions began preparing a manual that will increase the consistency with which information is provided about Dutch higher education. ■

Communication related to credential evaluation

Newsletter for Dutch credential evaluators

In order to foster communication within the entire national network of credential evaluators, Nuffic's Department for International Credential Evaluation publishes its own newsletter: the *DEO Nieuwsbrief*. It relates the most important developments taking place with respect to the education systems in other countries and the recognition of their diplomas.

Website

Information pertaining to credential evaluation was placed on the Nuffic website (www. nuffic.nl) in 1998. This required some adaptation of the information, but the effort seems worthwhile. Already a growing number of visitors from other countries are finding their way to the web pages that deal with matters of recognition.

Higher education terminology

Under the title "Information about the Dutch higher education system", a working group led by Nuffic is trying to bring some unity to the terminology used in publicity materials written for a foreign audience.

www.nuffic.nl

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4 Communication

Communication and the provision of information are major activities at Nuffic. They directly serve the aim of fostering international cooperation in higher education using every possible means. Communication directed specifically at the various target groups help to maintain a positive climate not only within the higher education institutions and their immediate environment, but also among the general public.

All the programmes and schemes that Nuffic manages are meant to create opportunities which enable individuals and institutions to gain international experience and to undertake successful international initiatives. But this requires communicating the right information at the right time. Timely publicity must first draw the attention of potential applicants to the possibilities that exist. Applicants must then be provided with accurate, clear information about the programmes and the procedures they must follow. Nuffic does its best to ensure that the process of submitting project proposals and scholarship applications is never hampered by a lack of information on the part of the applicants.

In 1998 all of Nuffic's promotional materials—from the basic booklet describing Nuffic to the leaflets that present its various products—were organized around the services Nuffic provides, also on behalf of its various clients. This cast an effective spotlight on what Nuffic has to offer, much of which stems from its professional expertise in programme management. The unity in the graphic materials also reflects the coherence in Nuffic's varied package of products and services.

Internet

The number of visitors to Nuffic's webite grew dramatically in 1998. The site acquired a simpler address (www.nuffic.nl), and was expanded in terms of both content and functionality. Several important additions were made, including information about new scholarship programmes under the names VISIE and Huygens. The list of countries and programmes for which Dutch students can use their VISIE grants is in fact only published online. The entire body of rules and regulations for the MHO programme is now also accessible online.

"Vagant Experience" is a new, interactive feature that has been added to the online publication of this Nuffic guide to possibilities for study and internships abroad. Also interactive is the new search engine that has been added to the site, which makes it easier than ever for visitors to find what they are looking for. The results of a user survey guided the effort to offer information that is tailor-made to the user's needs.

Transfer

Transfer is a periodical written for the Dutch-speaking professionals whose work is related to international cooperation in higher education. In 1998 as in other years, it played an important role as an independent forum for the discussion of internationalization. Each year the *Transfer seminar* draws a large audience. ▶

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The editor identifies emerging trends in the academic community. For example, in 1998 there was discussion of the fact that while internationalization is increasingly being incorporated into central institutional policy, initiatives are also being taken more and more at faculty level. Another subject of discussion was the need for closer cooperation with private companies and other partners who are not directly involved in education.

In cooperation with *Transfer's* publisher, Samsom Tjeenk Willink B.V., Nuffic began an inquiry among the journal's readers to see if it is achieving its purpose, and to explore how new target groups can be reached.

Organizing events

The Nuffic office that organizes events was responsible for the logistics surrounding 11 conferences and three courses in 1998. The services it offers to other Nuffic units also included helping to prepare the Dutch exhibits for the education fairs in Jakarta (Indonesia) and Taiwan, and for the NAFSA conference in the U.S. Following an evaluation in 1998, the trial period came to an end and the events office was given a permanent place in the Department for Communication.

Consultative bodies

Nuffic acts as secretariat for a number of bodies that bring together representatives of the higher education institutions for purposes of discussing policy related to internationalization and development cooperation. Meetings in 1998 were addressed by key figures in these fields. Three such bodies are known as COO, COI and HIB. Another is COSPA, which provides a forum for internship coordinators. ■

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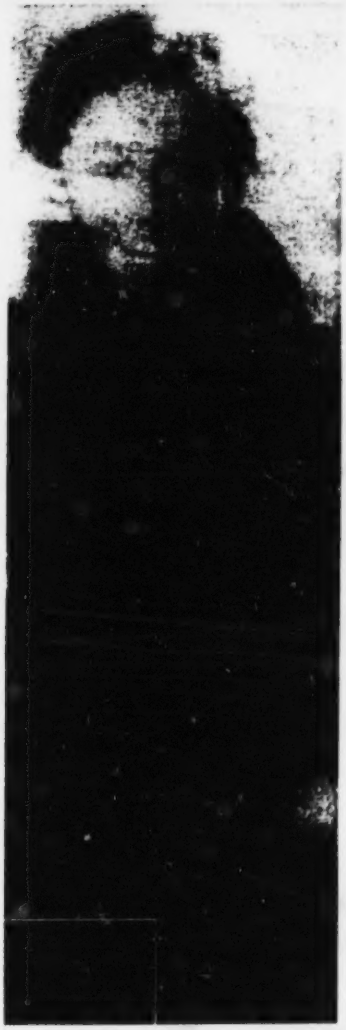


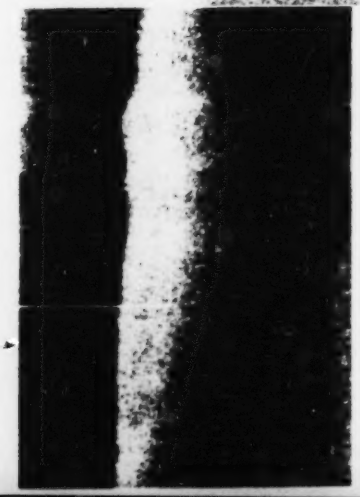
Library and Documentation Unit

Nuffic's Library and Documentation Unit offers a variety of information services which increase Nuffic's expertise and keep it up-to-date. For a "knowledge-intensive" organization like Nuffic, these services are absolutely essential and must be excellent. The Library and Documentation Unit contributes to the exchange and optimal use of knowledge and information by placing expertise in the most advanced techniques for supplying and managing information at everyone's disposal.

In 1998 the Unit's staff took part in three joint projects within the organization: the acquisition and introduction of a search engine for Nuffic's website, a course in how to use the Internet, and a project to set up an Intranet for the Nuffic staff. The project to draw the attention of Dutch embassy attaches to new literature in their subject areas was continued in 1998.

The library collection in 1998 consisted of some 14,000 titles and 250 subscriptions to periodicals. More and more use was made of the Internet, CD-ROMs and other new media. Nuffic's catalogues were incorporated into the central catalogue for the Netherlands, and materials and bibliographic data were once again exchanged with the libraries of the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).

In 1998, 1118 documents were loaned out, 765 of these to Nuffic staff members and 353 to people outside the organization.



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The Language Laboratory in 1998

Demand increased in 1998 for all types of instruction: for the lessons given in the language laboratory, for the private lessons given to individuals, and for the classes organized for groups.

Number of lessons conducted in the language laboratory in 1998

Dutch	508
English	143
French	45
Total:	676

Number of persons who took lessons in the laboratory in 1998, by language

Dutch	304
English	108
French	33
Total:	445 persons, representing 80 countries or regions

Most noteworthy in 1998 was the large number of French nationals who took Dutch lessons: 36, compared with 21 from Turkey, 16 from Iran, 15 from Russia, 13 from Indonesia, 12 from Great Britain, and 12 from the United States. France was also well represented among the persons learning English: 13. By comparison, 23 Dutch nationals took English lessons.

Eye-catcher

Miss Saigon

The musical Miss Saigon continued its run at the Circus Theatre in Scheveningen in 1998. A teacher from Nuffic's Language Laboratory continued to coach the non-Dutch members of the cast so that they would pronounce their Dutch lines well.

Individual and group lessons were specially commissioned by a number of clients: the producers of Miss Saigon, NOVIB, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Delft University of Technology, various foreign embassies, KPN Telecom, and the Institute of Social Studies.

Other activities included:

- classroom training for the state examination in Dutch as a Second Language (NT2);
- examination of candidates for the Certificate in Dutch as a Foreign Language at various levels, under the auspices of the Netherlands Language Union;
- presentation of the Language Laboratory at the information fair of the International School of The Hague.

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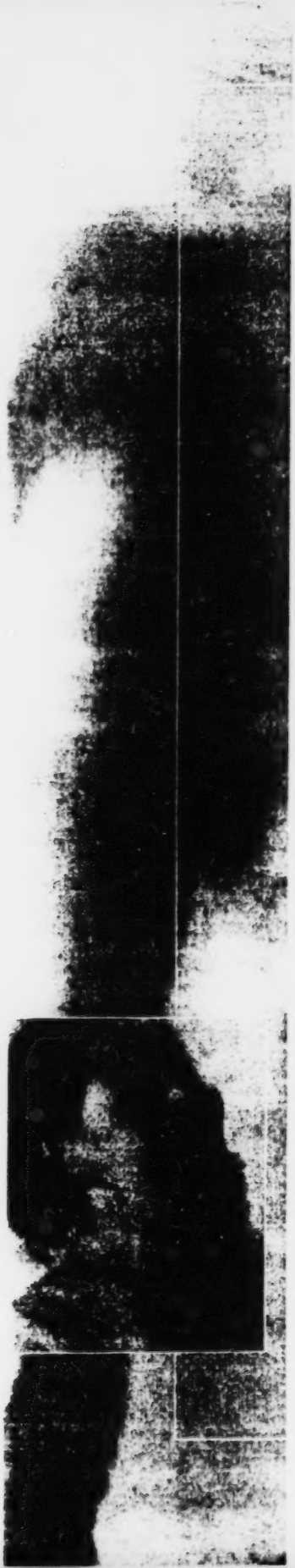

Administrative structure in 1998

Board

The Board is made up of six members appointed by the organizations that represent the three branches of higher education in the Netherlands: the HBO-Raad *(hogescholen)*, the VSNU (universities), and FION (International Education institutes), plus the chairman and secretary. Besides these permanent members, one or two outside experts may be appointed to the Board. The Board itself makes these appointments.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council has nine members who are also members of the Board or administrators of a higher education institution. The Board appoints these nine members plus up to five additional members who are experts in the field of international cooperation in education, research and/or cultural affairs.

Members of the Board

His Royal Highness, Prince Bernhard, Prince of the Netherlands *Honorary Chairman*
Mr. Ch.J.J.A. Moons *Honorary Member*
Drs. W.J. Deetman *Chairman*
Prof. drs. M.H. Meijerink *Vice-Chairman*
Dr. P.J.M. Thomeer *Treasurer*
Drs. A. van der Hek (until 10 July 1998)
Prof. dr. F. Leijnse (as of 10 July 1998)
Prof. dr. C.M. Karssen
Prof. dr. J.B. Opschoor
Prof. dr. D.J. Wolfson
Ms. mr. Y.C.M.Th. van Rooy (as of 17 March 1998)
Ms. dr. A.D. Wolff-Albers (as of 17 March 1998)
Drs. P.J.C. van Dijk *Secretary*

Members of the Advisory Council

Drs. W.J. Deetman *Chairman*
Ms. dr D. Burck *Royal Tropical Institute*
Drs. J.K.M. Gevers (died on 5 August 1998) *University of Amsterdam*
Prof. dr. ir. K. Harmsen *International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Sciences (ITC)*
Drs. F.J.M. Kalmthout *Hogeschool 's-Hertogenbosch*
Dr. H.J. van der Molen *Erasmus University, Rotterdam*
Dr. A. Peters *Hogeschool Enschede*
Prof. dr. M. Rem *Eindhoven University of Technology*
Drs. J.R. Swart *Radio Nederland Training Centre (RNTC)*
Drs. H. Vaessen *Hogeschool Haarlem*
Drs. J.G.F. Veldhuis (as of 16 December 1998) *Utrecht University*
Prof.dr. P.W.M. de Meijer (as of 23 September 1998) *Chairman of National Commission for UNESCO*
Mr. G.H.O. van Maanen (as of 23 September 1998) *Chairman of RAWOO*
Drs. P.J.C. van Dijk *Secretary*

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Crystal eye

"Making a name for itself in Europe"

It seems that Nuffic is ideally suited to bringing together experts and higher education institutions at an international level. For monitoring purposes, Nuffic itself is an expert and has a wealth of systematic knowledge. That's why it's the perfect organization to gather objective information. As a board member, I very much enjoy presenting Nuffic at the European level. But the organization could do more to make a name for itself as a top-rate European organization.

Although Nuffic has been an essential part of the national higher education scene for decades, its environment keeps changing. Nuffic is potentially equipped to issue statements regarding the quality of the distance education that at the moment is being offered in large quantities via the Internet. It can also play a central role in resolving the issue of master's degrees. Our unique academic titles create problems for Dutch graduates when they're abroad. It's urgent that the Dutch titles be given a realistic place in the bachelor-master structure."

Dr. A.D. Wolff-Albers, member of the Nuffic Board since March, 1998

The organization in 1998

As mentioned in the foreword to this annual report, the board and directors in 1998 launched a discussion within Nuffic of the organization's goals and mission, and its place with respect to the clients it serves. This discussion is to be one of the cornerstones of the long-term plan that will take Nuffic into the year 2002.

Keeping in mind its aim of responding with greater flexibility to the demand for its services, Nuffic carried out several reorganizations in 1998. The Department for Communcation was thoroughly restructured, and a plan was set in motion to reduce overhead and bureaucracy, and thus to achieve a more efficiently operating organization.

In 1998 Nuffic had 180 employees, 100 of whom were working full-time. This was a slight increase over 1997. More than 30 per cent of the staff has been employed at Nuffic for less than four years. The age group most heavily represented are the 30- to 40-year-olds. Nuffic employs more women (105) than men (75). Of the women, almost 41 per cent work part-time.

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The departments

Office of the Director
Director: drs. P.J.C. van Dijk
Deputy Director: drs. H.J. Vriesendorp

Department for Human Resource and Institutional Development
Head: dr. J.H.C. Walenkamp

Department for International Academic Relations
Head: drs. C.T.M. Kouwenaar

Department for International Credential Evaluation
Head: drs. J. Divis

Department for Educational Studies and Consultancy (DESC)
Head: ms. dr. R.M. van Meel

Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks (CIRAN)
Head: drs. G.W. von Liebenstein

Department for Communication
Head: mr. J.D. van Vliet

Department for Financial and Economic Affairs
Head: drs. J.J. Rooyackers

Department for Internal Affairs
Head: ms. drs. W.E. Broersma

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*Financial summary for 1998**

(in thousands of guilders)

Nuffic operation	**1998**	**1997**
Revenue:		
International Academic Relations	3.993	3,604
Human Resource and Institutional Development	8.068	6,587
International Credential Evaluation	997	26
Communication	1.536	1,293
Subsidy from Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	10.668	10,168
Total Revenue	25.262	22.078
Expenditure:		
International Academic Relations	5.887	5,390
Human Resource and Institutional Development	12.007	10.463
International Credential Evaluation	2.114	1,817
Communication	4.927	4,290
Total Expenditure	24.935	21.960
Operating results	327	118
Interest	762	668
Extraordinary revenue	600	450
Extraordinary expenditure	-/- 990	-/- 787
Balance for Nuffic operation	699	449
Programme management		
International Academic Relations	15,948	19.629
Human Resource and Institutional Development	59,926	56.358
International Credential Evaluation	1,306	18
Communication	-	-
Total	77,180	76.005

* The *Jaarrekening* is a separate, more detailed financial statement.

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Publications 1998

New publications, periodicals, and revised editions:

Vagant '98-'99 (annual edition)

Beurzen die je op weg helpen *(Scholarships to help you on your way)*
(reprinted with revisions)

Nuffic Papers 9
"Education with free steak knives? An Australian dilemma in attracting international students" (new)
Author: Bart C. Zijlstra

Nuffic Papers 10
"Virtual Mobility; New technologies and the internationalization of higher education" (new)
Edited by Marijk van der Wende

The Low Sky in Pictures (published by Scriptum) (new)
Author: Han van der Horst

The Low Sky; Understanding the Dutch
The book that makes the Netherlands familiar (Reprinted with minor revisions)
Author: Han van der Horst

Newsletter Weekly digest of news and views in the Netherlands

Transfer
Vakblad voor internationale samenwerking in hoger onderwijs en onderzoek (monthly)
(Journal for international cooperation in higher education and research)

BIS *Collected clippings of articles pertaining to internationalization and development cooperation in higher education* (bi-weekly)

Buitenpost *Newsletter for Dutch embassies* (semi-annual)

Annual Report 1997 and Financial Statement

Study in the Netherlands 1998-1999 *Glossy magazine in European and general editions* (annual editions)

Study in the Netherlands *Video, flyer and poster* (new)

Catalogue of International Courses in the Netherlands 1999-2000 (annual edition)

Visiebeurzen (VISIE grants) (reprinted with revisions)

Talentenprogramma; Beurzen voor talentvolle studenten 1999-2000 (new)
(Programme of scholarships for outstanding students)

Impact; Internship in a Dutch government organization (new)

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Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
AIT	Asian Institute for Technology
AOB	*Adviesbureau voor Opleiding en Beroep* (regional office in the Netherlands for careers counselling)
CIKARD	Center for Indigenous Knowledge for Agriculture and Rural Development
COI	*Centraal Overleg Internationalisering* (Committee for consultation regarding internationalization)
COLO	(Association of national organizations concerned with vocational education in the Netherlands)
COO	*Centraal Overleg Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (Committee for consultation regarding development cooperation)
COSPA	Coordinating Office for Student Placements Abroad
CROSS	*Coordinatie Rusland OnderwijsSamenwerking* (Coordination of educational cooperation with Russia)
D&O	*Diplomawaardering en Onderwijsvergelijking* (Nuffic's Department for International Credential Evaluation)
DESC	Department of Educational Studies and Consultancy
DGIS	*Directoraat-generaal Internationale Samenwerking* (Directorate General for International Cooperation, of the Dutch foreign ministry)
DON	*Diploma op Naam* (Diploma Evaluation)
DRIS	Development-related Research Information System
EAIE	European Association for International Education
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EDF	European Development Fund
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Area
ENIC	European National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility
EU	European Union
EXIN	*Het Nationaal Exameninstituut voor Informatica* (Examination Institute for Information Science)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FIDN	Federation of International Education Institutes in the Netherlands
HBO	*Hoger Beroepsonderwijs* (higher professional education)
HIB	*Hogescholen overleg Internationale Betrekkingen* (International relations forum for *hogescholen*)
HOB	*Programma Samenwerking Nederlandse Hogescholen met Onderwijsinstellingen in Ontwikkelingslanden ten behoeve van het Lager Onderwijs* (Programme for Cooperation between Dutch Universities of Professional Education and Educational Institutions in Developing Countries for the Benefit of Primary Education
HOOM	*Hoger Onderwijs in Opkomende Markten* (Higher Education in Emerging Markets)
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBG	*Informatie Beheer Groep* (Information Management Group, which administers the national system of student grants)
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	International Diploma Supplement
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
IKDM	Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor
ILO	International Labour Organization
IO	*Internationaal Onderwijs* (International Education; IE)
IRAS	*Informatiecentrum Richtlijn Algemeen Stelsel* (Centre for information regarding the EU's directive on a general system for the recognition of professional qualifications)
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
KIT	*Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen* (Royal Tropical Institute)
LEAD	Leiden Ethnosystems and Development Programme
MHO	*Medefinancieringsprogramma voor universitaire en HBO-samenwerking* (Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education (universities and *hogescholen*)
MOST	Management of Social Transformation
MSM	Maastricht School of Management
NAFSA	Association of International Educators
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre (EU and EEA)
NEC	Netherlands Education Centre
NFP	Netherlands Fellowships Programme
NIMA	Nederlands Instituut voor Marketing (Netherlands Institute for Marketing)
NIPO	*Nederlands Instituut voor de Publieke Opinie en het Marktonderzoek* (Netherlands Institute for Public Opinion and Market Research)
NIRP	Netherlands-Israel Development Research Programme
NOVIB	*Nederlandse Organisatie voor Internationale Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation)
NUC	*Nationale Unesco Commissie* (National Commission for UNESCO)
Nuffic	*Nederlandse organisatie voor internationale samenwerking in het hoger onderwijs* (Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education)
NTIO	Netherlands Trade and Investment Office
PHARE	Pologne-Hongrie, Aide à la Reconstruction Economique (EU programme of assistance for Central and Eastern Europe)
PTS	Postgraduate Technologies Studies Programme
RAWOO	*Raad van Advies voor het Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek in het kader van Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council)
RLD	*Rijksluchtvaartdienst* (Directorate-General of Civil Aviation)
SFP	Special Fellowships Programme (part of the Netherlands Fellowships Programme)
SRM	Dutch Foundation for Advertising and Marketing Education
TSP	Jan Tinbergen Scholarships Programme
UAF	University Assistance Fund
UFP	University Fellowships Programme
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VISIE	*Volledige Internationale Studie in Europa* (Programme by which Dutch student grants can be used to complete entire degree programmes abroad)
VSNU	*Vereniging van Universiteiten* (Association ofUniversities in the Netherlands)
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WO	*Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs* (university education)

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